

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

SAM-01 AID-05 /076 W

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R 131050Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5463

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COLOMBO 2948

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PINT,PINS, CE

SUBJECT: TAMIL UNREST IN PROVINCES

REF: A.COLOMBO 2809 B. COLOMBO 2332

1.SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH WELL-CONCEALED FROM DELEGATES TO NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN COLOMBO, RADICAL, SEPARATIST TAMILS ARE ENGAGED IN ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS IN TAMIL-MAJORITY NORTHERN AND EASTERN PROVINCES. CURRENT AGITATIONS ARE IN SUPPORT OF INCARCERATED TAMIL YOUTHS WHO HAVE GONE ON HUNGER STRIKE DEMANDING EITHER TO BE CHARGED OR RELEASED (REFTEL A). WE HAVE UNCONFIRMED REPORT OF ONE DEATH IN DEMONSTRATION. END SUMMARY.

2.ALTHOUGH UNREPORTED IN LOCAL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS, WHICH IS SUPPOSEDLY UNDER INSTRUCTION TO ABJURE PUBLISHING BAD NEWS DURING NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE, RADICAL TAMILS ARE ENGAGED IN PROTEST CAMPAIGN IN TAMIL AREAS OF NORTH AND EAST SRI LANKA. WHILE ULTIMATE AIM IS ESTABLISHMENT OF SEPARATE TAMIL NATION, CURRENT GRIEVANCE IS SAID TO BE PLIGHT OF YOUTHS WHO HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED FOR PERIODS OF UP TO YEAR BUT HAVE NOT BEEN CHARGED;

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SOME ARE THOSE ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF ASSASSINATION

OF JAFFNA MAYOR LAST YEAR (REFTEL B).SOME PRISONERS
WENT ON HUNGER STRIKE TWO WEEKS AGO AND ONE IS REPORTED
TO BE UNCONSCIOUS NOW.

3. WE HAVE A REPORT OF SEVERAL BUS-BURNINGS IN JAFFNA
AND BATTICALOA EARLIER THIS WEEK. (NATIONALIZED TRANSPORT
SERVICE IS POPULAR TARGET OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATORS.)
THERE IS UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT ONE BYSTANDER WAS KILLED
WHEN NAVY SECURITY FORCES (SUBSTITUTING FOR POLICE CALLED
TO COLOMBO FOR CONFERENCE DTUIES) FIRED ON DEMONSTRATORS
IN JAFFNA.

4.IN FURTHER AGITATION AUGUST 12, TAMILS DISRUPTED COURT
PROCEEDINGS IN NUMBER OF COURTS AROUND COUNTRY. ALTHOUGH
JUDGES REACTED DIFFERENTLY AND SOME DEMONSTRATORS WERE MERELY
WARNED, AT LEAST ONE, V. ANANTHASANGARE, TAMIL CONGRESS
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR KILONOCHCHI, WAS REPORTEDLY
SENTENCED TO TWO WEEKS IMPRISONMENT. TAMIL UNITED
FRONT HEAD, S.J.V. CHELVANAYAKAM, 78 YEARS OLD AND
AILING, WAS DETAINED "UNTIL RISING OF COURT," WHCIH
AMOUNTED TO ONLY TWO HOURS.
REED

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